

Message Text

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ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EA-06 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 PM-03

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R 201015Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2590

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC

USSAG

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 1207

LIMDIS

DP/W FOR HENDERSON; GENEVA FOR SIEVERTS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, LA

SUBJ: DEAN/SHARMAN

1. IN THE COURSE OF A MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER
TODAY IN LUANG PRABANG, I RASIED THE DEAN/SHARMAN AFFAIR.

2. I GAVE THE PRIME MINISTER A RUN-DOWN OF THE MEETING
MRS. DEAN AND I HAD HAD WITH PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG AFTER
OUR CALL ON HIM NOTING THAT IT HAD BEEN SUGGESTED THAT
MRS. DEAN STAY UNTIL FEBRUARY 15TH AND WE HAD HOPED
THAT SHE WOULD GET HER SON BACK OR AT LEAST GET NEWS
BEFORE SHE LEFT. NOTHING HAD HAPPENED. SOUVANNA
REPLIED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE DEAN CASE WITH
SOUPHANOUVONG LAST NIGHT AND THE LATTER FELT VERY
BADLY ABOUT THIS AFFAIR BUT COULD DO NOTHING UNTIL
HE NEXT WENT TO SAM NEUA. I SAID THAT SURELY A MES-
SAGE COULD BE SENT WITHOUT THE PRINCE BEING THERE.

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SOUVANNA SAID THAT UNFORTUNATELY HIS BROTHER WAS NOT

THE LEADER OF THAT PARTY AND HE WOULD HAVE TO PERSUADE KAYSONE AND NOUHAK TO TAKE ACTION. THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION WITHIN THE PL ABOUT THE DEAN AFFAIR. JUST TO BE SURE, I ASKED WHETHER THE TOUGH GUYS (LES DURS) WISHED TO KEEP THEM WHEREAS OTHERS WISHED TO LET THEM GO. SOUVANNA SAID THAT THIS WAS THE PROBLEM. SOUPHANOUVONG WOULD DO EVERYTHING HE COULD AND HOPED TO GO TO SAM NEUA SOON.

3. THE PRIME MINISTER THEORIZED THAT ONE OF THE PROBLEMS MIGHT BE THAT THE BOYS COULD HAVE BEEN HELD BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE. I SAID THAT THIS WAS CONTRARY TO ALL THE INFORMATION WE HAD HAD AND HAD MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PL. IT SEEMED VERY CLEAR FROM THE DEBRIEFINGS OF ESCAPEES THAT KHAM KEUT WAS A PL FACILITY. THE PRIME MINISTER AGREED THAT THIS WAS SO.

4. I CLOSED BY SAYING THAT PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG HAD ASKED ME NOT TO HANDLE THIS AFFAIR DRAMATICALLY AND HAD STRESSED THE PL DESIRE TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH AMERICA. I NOTED THAT WE HAD BEEN VERY PATIENT AND RESERVED BUT THAT THE INCIDENT WAS DRAMATIC AND THIS SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED. THE DEAN BOY HAD BEEN A PRISONER FOR SIX MONTHS AND THAT HIS CONTINUED DETENTION WAS OUTRAGEOUS (UN SCANDALE). THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE HOPED IT WOULD BE RESOLVED SOON.

5. FACT OF MY CALL ON SOUVANNA AND IMPLICIT RECOGNITION THAT BOYS ARE INDEED PRISONERS OF PL SHOULD BE PASSED ON TO DEANS. HOWEVER, BELIEVE IT PRUDENT THAT REVELATION OF AN APPARENT SPLIT WITHIN PL LEADERSHIP SHOULD BE HELD CLOSELY. ANY PUBLIC INDICATION OF THIS POINT MIGHT ONLY CAUSE PL TO CLOSE RANKS AND HARDEN THEIR POSITION.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

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